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THE RED CROSS

IN CHARGE OF

JANE A. DELANO, R.N.

Chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service

ITEMS

The American Red Cross has decided to recall all its units in October of this year, except from Belgium, where the nurses have been serving for so much shorter time than in other countries.

Helen Scott Hay, who has been on duty with the Red Cross in Russia, went to Bulgaria at the close of her term of service in Russia and is helping make plans for the training school for Bulgarian nurses which will be established now if funds can be raised to support the undertaking.

On July 31 two nurses were sent to Serbia to assist in organizing infant welfare work in that country under the direction of two women physicians. It is the intention to establish a hospital, probably at Nish, which shall be headquarters for the instruction of mothers in the care of infants. Mrs. Maud H. Metcalf of New York City is a graduate of Bellevue Hospital Training School, class of 1904. From graduation until 1911 she was engaged in private nursing, and for seven months did infant welfare work with the New York Milk Committee. She was also assistant superintendent of nurses at the Savannah Hospital, Savannah, Georgia. Mrs. Metcalf has recently returned from Russia where she was on duty more than nine months with one of the Red Cross Units. Grace E. Utley of New York City is a graduate of Hahnemann Hospital, class of 1897. From this time until 1898 she was head surgical nurse and acting assistant superintendent of the Utica Homeopathic Hospital, Utica, N. Y. She was at Dr. Hallock's Health School for nervous, medical and convalescent patients, at Cromwell, Conn., in the summer of 1900, and took a course at the Presbyterian Hospital for added experience in the summer of 1902. In the summer of 1908 she did district nursing at Henry Street Settlement, and the year following she took a post-graduate course at Sloane Maternity Hospital. Since then and at various time she has done private duty at home and abroad.

EXPERIENCES OF UNIT D AT HASLAR, ENGLAND

BY J. BEATRICE BOWMAN, R.N.

The Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar, was built about 1735, and contains 99 wards with about 28 beds to a ward. When we arrived the beds numbered 2600. The peace capacity is 1500; emergency capacity, 7000. In peace time, the average number of patients is about 500 a week.

When we arrived there were 26 English sisters already there, 4 Navy sisters and 22 reserves. As the work was very light, we were distributed amongst the various wards to learn the system and to become accustomed to Navy regulations. It was not easy for our nurses coming from private duty to be suddenly dropped into a military hospital, but that they tried hard and succeeded was shown by a comment of Surgeon General Dennis, of the English Navy, "If your motto is quietness and efficiency you have quite lived up to it."

The kindnesses and hospitality shown us from the moment of our arrival, will never be forgotten and our English naval sisters and Naval Reserve sisters will always be a bright and happy memory to Unit D. It would be an inexcusable oversight not to mention the kindness and consideration shown by the Naval medical officers for we must take into consideration the difficulties in working with people whose ways are different. We were more than grateful for their unfailing courtesy and kindness and also for the hospitality shown us by their wives.

The morning after our arrival, Miss Hickley the head sister, and I had a long conference. She was greatly surprised to learn that we had been graduated from the best training schools in the United States; and in explanation she said the English Red Cross has not our standard but is composed of women who have had six months' training in First Aid.

The sisters went on duty at 8 a.m.; first lunch was served at 12.30 for the relieving nurses, and second lunch at 1.30 after which they remained off duty until 5 p.m. Dinner was served night sisters at 7.30 p.m.; second dinner at 8. One half day a week was given. As in our Naval hospitals, the language is "sea going," the floor being "the deck," the top floor "top side" and down stairs, "below." The sisters' office is called the "Sisters' Cabin," the operating room is "the theatre"; all of which greatly interested and amused the American contingent. The Hospital Corps is called "The Sick Berth Staff" and is composed of "Ward Masters" (petty officers) and "Stewards" or nurses. When talking to the Surgeon General one day about our

nurses he rather sharply told me that "they were the 'Sisters' and the men were the 'nurses,'" "Sisters," in the English hospitals, being the rank given the staff nurses. The St. George Ambulance Corps men were there in great numbers, acting as orderlies and making themselves generally useful, during their spare time undergoing strenuous drilling. Large numbers of them were sent to the front while we were there.

The beds at this hospital were interesting, being well made of iron, black enameled. The head and foot pieces were easily removed, allowing the patient to be gently placed without unnecessary jarring. The method of removing the patient from the operating theatre to the bed was excellent. Upon the stretcher that is to bring the patient from the theatre is a piece of canvas of the required size, on which is placed the necessary equipment for an ether bed. The operation over, the patient is carefully lifted onto the stretcher. Iron rods are run through deep hems in the canvas and clamped together at the ends, thus forming a strong stretcher to carry him to the bed and on which he is placed. The iron rods, only, are removed until he is able to have the ether bed taken away.

Of course we had great fun over the English expressions and in turn the English were ever laughing at us. I gasped when, on asking a Navy sister about a very ill patient, she solemnly declared him to be "a jolly sick man;" and we had some difficulty in learning to say we would send "a chit" to the office when we meant a slip or requisition. Absorbent cotton was unknown, but "cotton wool" proved to be the same thing. All medicines were sent to the wards ready to administer, even a medical enema was made in the dispensary. At first we gasped at the huge doses, but were greatly relieved to find them largely water. Bottles were not labeled as to the name of medicine, so we were generally at a loss in knowing the drug administered. However, we soon found our tongues and asked the doctors. Bottles for external medicines are blue and for internal medicines are white and are kept in separate cases.

The iodine blower greatly interested our doctors for through it iodine was much more easily applied and certainly was more economically used. The blower apparatus is like the thermo-cautery blower and to it is attached a bottle arrangement like an atomizer. The spray works well and is used on every occasion where iodine is needed.

The ward was heated by two stoves placed at equal distance from either end of the ward. The English people may be accustomed to the cold, but I noticed the English sisters shivered just as much as we did if they were at any distance from the stoves. At this hospital we

met Mr. G. L. Cheatele of Cheatele forceps fame, who is being paid by the Government as a consultant surgeon, and Dr. Rolleston who is the consultant physician. Both are brilliant men and it was delightful to work with them. We also met Sir William Osler, who was making a short visit from Oxford. The Admiral of the Port of Portsmouth, and Lady Meux called upon us and were afterwards most hospitable and kind.

On November 7, Lady Meux took Dr. H. and me in her car to the Netley Military Hospital which is the largest army hospital. The building dates from the Crimean War, Queen Victoria having laid the first stone, and the bed capacity is one thousand. The hospital is more than a quarter of a mile long, and is three stories high. It is very awkwardly built, as the sun corridors run the entire length of the sunny side and the wards, opening from the back into the corridors, are quite dark. There were 120 German prisoners, and a sentinel stood guard at the doors with gun and fixed bayonet, no one being allowed to enter without special permission. We asked if they had had any trouble and were told: "not with the English, but the Belgians and Indians are anxious to get at the Germans." Here in Netley, we saw 200 Indian patients, the Gurkhas and Sikhs. The Gurkhas have full beards and the Sikhs are clean-shaven, but both have long hair coiled on top their heads under their turbans and are tall, well-built men. We were told that they would not eat food cooked or served by any but their own people, and as the ox is a sacred animal, they would eat nothing but mutton, or goat meat, and drink goats' milk; also they kill all their own meat. When asked if they liked the war, their faces brightened and they answered, through an interpreter, "Oh, yes, it was a pretty fight."

They were busy enough at Netley; the theatre sister told me they were operating day and night, and she looked the truth of her statement. From the hospital we were taken to the Red Cross Camp, affiliated with Netley. There the British Red Cross has a splendid encampment composed of shacks, some of which are portable. Each shack contains twenty beds and the entire bed capacity is 500. More shacks were in the process of building. Our attention was called to the fact that the majority of the wounded Indians had bullet wounds in the left hand, gotten by patting down the upper edge of the trench to make a resting place for their rifles.

On October 13, news came that about 800 Belgians would arrive. 200 came at 8 p.m., and the remainder after midnight, making a total of 575. All were terribly weary and had been without food for 48 hours, but they were soon put to bed and fed. On October 16, we received

378 more and on the 17th about 200, making the total number 1,000. We then made up for all idle time, and oh, how glad we were to help. Our cases were all septic, shrapnel wounds being the most common.

It was with great regret that we left Haslar for Paignton. The following extract from a letter received from the head nursing sister reveals the true comradeship that existed between the sisters of Haslar and "Unit D." She writes, "I am more sorry than I can express, that you all have gone, but you have left, I can truthfully answer for the others (the Naval sisters) as myself, the true spirit of 13 loyal women and you know how much I admire that spirit."

TOO LATE FOR CLASSIFICATION

REPORT OF THE LEAGUE MEETINGS

The report of the National League of Nursing Education, which was to have appeared in this issue of the JOURNAL, has been delayed because of the illness of the former secretary of the League, Sara E. Parsons. Miss Parsons hopes to have the report ready for the October JOURNAL.

TEXAS

THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSE EXAMINERS will hold examinations November 9 and 10 in El Paso, Ft. Worth, Houston and San Antonio, on the following subjects: practical nursing, surgical nursing, obstetrical nursing, materia medica, anatomy, physiology, hygiene, dietetics and gynecology.

M. M. TAYLOR, *Secretary,*
Physicians and Surgeons Hospital, San Antonio.